



NEWS RELEASE

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District: District 11 -- San Diego/Imperial Counties
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Caltrans To Open Northbound Lanes At Interstate 5/I-805 in Sorrento Valley

SAN DIEGO – On a twist to the cliché – the whole enchilada - elected state and local officials joined representatives from the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) today to announce they are giving local motorists about half an enchilada and opening just the northbound lanes at the I-5/805 Merge.

The opening represents about a 40 percent completion of the entire \$176 million construction project and is expected to reduce many of the weaving issues associated with vehicles traveling to SR-56 with its own bypass lane from the Merge. Through traffic should continue to use the existing main lanes of I-5 to travel north of the Del Mar Area.

"This is the second of three projects in this area to help other projects include the earlier opening of State Route 56 and the Interstate 15 Managed Lanes Project that is currently under construction.

When complete the new I-5/I-805 Merge will be 23 lanes at its widest point. With so many new lanes, the Department has published advertising and posted information on its web site to help motorists find their way.

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The most important change to the new northbound lanes is the bypass lane. Motorists must use the new bypass lane to access Carmel Mountain Road or SR-56. Permanent green directional signs on both northbound I-5 and I-805 are in place in to direct motorist to the bypass lane. However, if a motorist accidentally merges onto the new bypass lane, it does have one through lane back onto the I-5 main lanes.

This lane is not recommended for through traffic. Caltrans expects a slight learning curve with the new lanes and is urging drivers to pay attention to the signs as they become familiar with the new freeway.

There is no change to the through traffic.

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GUIDE TO USING THE NEW INTERSTATE 5/I-805 NORTHBOUND LANES

The newly-constructed northbound lanes on the Interstate 5/I-805 "Merge" Project will be opened the week of February 19. This portion of the freeway just south of the interchange will look different and initially require motorists to pay special attention to new exits for accessing Carmel Mountain Road and State Route 56.

As you can see in the map, motorists will be required to merge into a dedicated bypass lane in advance of the interchange to get to Carmel Mountain Road and SR-56.

There will be no access to these two points from the main lanes of the freeway. This bypass lane separates the through northbound traffic from the vehicles traveling east. Motorists will use the I-5 main lanes to access Carmel Valley Road and Del Mar Heights Road.

The remaining portion of the \$176 million project is on the southbound side and is expected to be completed in the Fall of 2007.

If you have questions, please contact the Caltrans Public Information Office at (619) 688-6670.

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